



Talking Points

For VS Field Staff

◆ **Who is eligible to participate?**

Operations with 5 or more goats will be randomly selected through the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) to participate. Unfortunately, to ensure our study is representative in scope, we cannot accept volunteers.

◆ **When will the study start?**

NASS will start contacting selected operations in July for the first questionnaire. Operations that complete the first questionnaire will then be asked if they would like to continue. Operations that continue will be contacted by a USDA veterinarian to complete the second questionnaire and any biologic testing starting in September.

◆ **What is the purpose of this study?**

The purpose of the NAHMS Goat 2019 study is to provide individual participants and stakeholders with valuable information on the U.S. goat industry. Remind the producer of the presurvey materials, including the presurvey letter, study launch sheet, and biologics benefit handout, which should answer many questions they have regarding the study.

◆ **Why should a producer participate?**

Producers that fully participate (both the NASS and the VS phases) in the NAHMS Goat 2019 study will have the opportunity to receive free biological testing, including:

- Fecal-egg count reduction test results for gastrointestinal parasites,
- Scrapie-resistant genotyping,
- *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* testing results, and
- *Salmonella*, *E. coli*, *Campylobacter*, *Giardia*, and *Cryptosporidium* fecal culture results.

Producers will receive producer reports that describe the results of the biological testing that was performed on their operation within 3 months of sample collection. These results will remain confidential.

Summary results will be published in informational sheets and in-depth reports addressing important goat health and management topics will be available to producers on the NAHMS website.

Producers who participate will represent many other producers like them who were not selected, and so full participation is the best way to get their voices, and similar producer's voices, heard. Producer participation will benefit the entire goat industry by providing management and health information, which will help others know more about the industry and help policymakers and industry make informed decisions.

According to Tom Boyer, a goat producer and Past President of the American Goat Federation “...*This NAHMS study is a critical part of the future development and advancement of our industry. Please take the time to accurately complete the study which will provide each participant specific information about the health of their flock as well as providing a quantum leap forward for our entire industry.*”

- ◆ **How many VS visits will there be?**
One or two visits will be needed to administer the questionnaires and complete any biological sampling. The questionnaire will take approximately 60 minutes to complete. A supplemental questionnaire will be administered on operations that participate in agritourism and will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.
- ◆ **How can a producer be assured of confidentiality of the results from his/her operation?**
As with all studies conducted by the National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS), neither the NAHMS staff nor the testing laboratories will know the names or addresses of any of the participants. Samples and results will be identified by operation ID number only. Regional and national results will be reported as summary data only so that it will be impossible to identify data from individual operations. NAHMS enforces strict data security and protections procedures on any data collected as part of the study.
- ◆ **Should a producer be concerned about depopulation or quarantine of the biological testing performed during phase II (VS)?**
NAHMS is not a regulatory program. Any data or samples collected by the veterinary medical officer—including results of scrapie genotyping--**will not be used for regulatory purposes.** Any test results are confidential and will be returned to producers in sealed envelopes. Results returned to producers can help improve health of operation animals and/or refine the health and management practices of the operation but are **not** used to penalize an operation in any way. However, if the veterinarian suspects a foreign animal disease, such as foot and mouth disease, may be present on the operation, the veterinarian is required to report the operation to the State Veterinary Office.
- ◆ **What if a producer is uncomfortable answering one or more of the questions in an interview?**
Producers can decline to answer any questions they are uncomfortable answering. Please make a note in the margin that the Producer declined to answer the question.
- ◆ **What if a producer does not want to participate in any of the biological sampling?**
ALL portions of every NAHMS study are completely voluntary. A producer can simply decline to participate in all or part of the biological sampling portion of the study. Producers will be able to indicate whether they are interested in participating in any biological sampling when the VMO or AHT initially contacts them.

For more information on the Goat 2019 study, contact:

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